

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, November 14, 1899

Beinn Bhreagh, Victoria County, Cape Breton, N.S. November 14, 1899. Alexander mine!

I was glad to know for certain that you were well on your journey, by the receipt of your telegram from St Johns. We will do our best to see those stars, and be properly appreciative of our good fortune in viewing a sight that will henceforth be invisible to mortal eyes for three and thirty years. But its horribly hard for me to be appreciative of anything at four A. M. I am afraid I wouldnt care very much if it were to be a sight of houses on Mars with people walking all around, to be seen once and never again!

But I have some sort of idea that I would like to look at those stars because you want me to. So I will, and my family with me. Bessie says what a lot of work we would do if we staid up them, and thinks that she would like to try it. but I cant have such dreadfully hard-working people as that in my house. Thy make you feel so uncomfortable. I hope that we will see something, but it doesnt look like it, the clouds are heavy, and hide the moon although its light filters through.

I have drawn on Capital for two thousand, and paid all my bills, and have I think, enough in my Nova Scotia account to last until December. I think that the Trust ought to have that much income for us. About Noel, You must remember that Charlie is his uncle, and that it would be very difficult for him to advise you and not conflict on the one hand with his desire to help his nephew, and on the other with his duty as your financial adviser. I think he will very probably decline to say anything on the matter one way or tae other. Now I hardly think that you can be more willing to help Noel than I to have you, although he is your cousin not mine. I dont think that ther is any thing in your idea of bieng bound to do something for other people (sons because you have none of your own, because your daughters have cost you fully as much as sons would, and because further you have

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already put several people's children through an education, including Noel himself. But if everything is all right I would like to have you help Noel, because it looks as if he were a very clever young fellow, and likely to be a famous man, and it would be fine to have a hand in the making of such an one. On the other hand it seems to me very decidedly better to be just before we are generous. I think that we ought to have enough to pay our own debts before we go to paying Noel's. Whatever you may say about our big income and our being able to live on it, the fact remains that we have never yet done so, and I don't think that we ought to incur any further expenses until we have done so. I do not think that you have the right to make life harder for me and your own children for the sake of somebody else's. Such a character as Noel's is sure to make its way somehow. It is not a question of giving him his only start in life, it is only giving him one kind rather than another. It seems to me that you need all your money for your own children. They are being kept way up here now simply and entirely because you have not the money to keep them anywhere else. It would be a wrong to them to restrict your ability to help them still further at the present time as I have been thinking on paper as I have written. All this was not as clear to me when I began as now. I do not want to be selfish, or ask more of or my children than they are entitled to. But I do realize that they have not had the opportunities that most other girls of their position have. They do suffer from having a deaf mother, and a father so absorbed in his work that he won't go out and make friends for them. They have had to do the best they could almost alone, and I am not satisfied with what they have been able to do. I want us to make a great effort for them this winter and next summer, and we must not make it any harder for us to give them the very best of the world than it already is. I really cannot see why it is not right even for us to use capital for that purpose, because in a few years, they will not need so much as they do now, and we can economize then. I sent it letter to let them the enjoyment of than was by & bye where they can longer saw offer her the would made their. Affiliate what is length an to leave them that much perfect. We could better help Noel a few years earlier, or a few years latter. I don't see how we can now. And I say this with great regret. Noel says to use him as a speculation. I believe thoroughly that it would be a good one if we could afford to wait for our income

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from it but that is just what we cant. Whatever you do dont forget that Noel wants a speedy answer.

I would like you to help Mr McCurdy. If ther is anything in his invention, it ought to be encouraged. I think it would be so much better for Mr McCurdy to be in an independent position, and it seems to me here is his chance, and that it would be well for you to help to start him even if you have to use some more of your capital. He does not need as much as Noel, and there turn will be sooner. I dont think you ought to urge him to return with you, for his affairs must need all his time now. Perhaps if you offered to take care of his family while he was pushing his ebedec that would be all that was necessary.

very much love. How I did will for last night. I took you dressing from